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Subject: Lytvynets, Sofiya Hryhorivna

Date: 15 of April, 1965

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

1. Subject, nee Lavriy, born October 19, 1906 in Voynyliv, Stanyslavivska Oblast, now Ivano-Frankivska Oblast. She arrived in Canada in July, 1961, and she came for good to her son, Roman Lytvynets, who resided at that time at 11432 - 111 A Ave., Edmonton, Alta., Canada. A year and a half ago, she moved to Toronto where she lives now with her son at 102 Bellwoods Ave., Toronto 3, Ont., Canada.

*has been
of her
certified
sent to
a Bureau
2 June 65*

Subject lived in Lviv for over 25 yrs. She is Ukrainian, Catholic of the Byzantine Right, graduate of gymnasium, divorced for over 25 yrs. She is quite intelligent lady, serious, and with a good sense of humor. She was never a member of the Party, never imprisoned nor exiled.

Before coming to Canada, Subject was working in Lviv in various restaurants, including one at the main railroad station, and also managed one or a group at one time.

Before leaving the USSR, all Subject's documents were taken away from her in Moscow, as is the case with every emigrating person, and, as she was told, were put there into the archives. The only documents which one can take along, in addition to the emigration passport, are a birth certificate (enclosed) and a certificate of marriage or divorce.

2. Subject was interviewed in her present home, at the address stated above, on April 10 and 11, 1965.

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Some excerpts that might be of eventual interest are given in part II :

II

1. OFF-LIMITS AREAS

- a. In 1950's at the Citadel in Lviv the military personel was doing some sort of underground excavation because a very large amount of dirt was carried by trucks from there for a long time. The entrance for the civilians is out of the question and only authorized personnel has the excess to it. Even some adjoining streets like Osulin-kych are closed for all kind of ~~trape~~ traffic, and the only street now opened to the traffic is Pelchynska, now called Dzerzhynsky.
- b. There is an off-limits area in the Black Forest (once called Kameraliski Forests) near Bolokhiv (not Bolekhiv), Ivano-Frankivska Oblast. Something has been built there. In 1957 a few men went to this forest to pick some mushrooms and they disappeared. After a few ~~xx~~ years they sent postcards to their families from some unmarked place and without forwarding address, stating that they are alive and will not write again.
- c. Near the city of Mykolayiv, Lvivska Oblast, a "military city" has been constructed and the entire area is off-limits to the civilian population. From hear-say, it is supposed to be a jamming terrain.

The people are not afraid of those off-limits areas in case of the war. They are not afraid of bombs either. The people say "let them (Americans) drop their bombs at once, we are waiting for it for a long time", "let them start the war, we will do the rest".

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2. SECURITY ORGANS and ARRESTS

Among the members of the militia there was quite a ~~mm~~ number of the Ukrainians, but in the KGB there were very few of them.

In 1961, there were very few, or practically no political arrests, and if such did occur, they were very secret or covered up under different pretext, like common crime, misdemeanour, speculation, etc.

The most frequent and most numerous arrests at the present are those for the black-market speculations and they take place not only among ordinary people but high ranking officials as well. The punishment for the speculation on a wider scale was death.

After their release, the political prisoners were not allowed to return to their hometowns or even to their areas, but had to make their settlements elsewhere. The few, who managed to do so, had to pay a bribe of 7.000 to 10.000 rubles in order to be registred in the given city or village. A great number of released prisoners made their new homes in Kryvvy Rih.

The attitude of the local population in the Ukraine towards those released was always favorable and kind, and the people helped them financially as much as they could.

On the other hand, the local administrative organs treated them according to all the rules and regulations -- refused to register them and give them jobs in their jurisdictions, and kept them under the close watch.

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If those released decided to settle as free people at the places of their exile, or free Ukrainians agreed to move voluntarily outside the Ukraine, the authorities were very pleased with it and helped them considerably in the resettlement.

3. According to hear-say, in 1959 or 1960 there was a tremendous explosion on the Kiev's suburbs on the Dniepr. The explosion occurred about 9AM, after the people had already gone to work. In the vicinity there were many barracks with soldiers and many children establishments. The explosion was so powerful that everything went under the ground, and the people estimate about 7.000 persons killed. The firemen and soldiers arrived with help and many of them died too while entering that area. The telephones were not working and no one was allowed to write about it or even to speak. In the surrounding area all the houses and everything else was completely destroyed.

At this time, in that vicinity, there was work going on (building or repairing) in connection with the Dnieproges, and also there were going on diggings for the subway. But the people explain it that there had to be an underground factory or storage connected with the atoms, or some kind of very powerful explosive material, because of tremendous explosion and a great devastation in the whole area. No one could say for sure whether this was some kind of sabotage of the underground organization, malfunction, or experimentation.

4. Many European delegations to the World Festival of Youth in Moscow in 1957 had to pass through Lviv. There, they were greeted at the main railroad station with music, flowers, and parades. The station was

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closed to the general public, and only militia, officials, and stewards were allowed to be there. The regular menus in the restaurant and cafeteria at the station disappeared and were substituted by the new and fancy, and the prices on the menus were printed ten times lower ~~xx~~ than the regular. Although there was a great shortage of food in the city, the restaurant at the station was well supplied with a great variety and with luxurious food. All of this was done, of course, for the propagandistic purposes.

5. The people talked that during Stalin's reign, on the premises of the Kremlin, there was a secret medical clinic for the foreign party dignitaries, conducted entirely by the Jewish personnel. Not even Khrushchev knew where exactly it was located and what was going on there. Furtsova learned all about it still when Stalin was alive and she was the one who confided it to Khrushchev. For that he made her his secretary and later Minister, but it was widely talked about that her primary duty was to be his mistress.

In 1952 in this clinic numerous foreign and domestic statesmen were "cured to death". First Pelekhatyy of Lviv, a few weeks later Berut, and then a famous Czech (name forgotten). This clinic still operates today in the same fashion and with the same purpose.

6. Beria, during his short-lasting period, gained many supporters and was liked by all the people of the Soviet Union but the Russians. He gave, through his initiative and slogans, to the people of all the Republics many hopes for improvement of the situation, equality of rights among all nationalities, and the true interpretation of the constitution.

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One of his most popular slogans proclaimed was that the people of various nationalities should live on ^{their} ~~its~~ own ethnographic territories and they should govern the affaires of their respective Republics themselves (until then, ~~xx~~ and as the case is today, the Russians comprise the majority of the population, esp. in large cities, of different Republics, and they also hold the key administrative and party positions). One of his first and most widely acclaimed steps was to take down all Russian signs on the buildings, railroad stations, stes, etc. in all the Republics and change them with signs in the respective language of that Republic (this remains till today and Khrushchev did not dare to revered it back to Russian).

This particular policy as well as other reforms and steps taken caused the Russians to hate Beria because they were loosing the position of leadership in the Soviet Union and most people interpred this fact as the primary cause of his downfall. During that period throughout the entire Soviet Union developed a very strong Anti-semitic feeling and there was a danger of greater reprisals against the Jews.

7. CHURCH

There are only two Russian churches in Lviv -- one is the former Orthodox church from the pre-war times and the other is converted from one of the Polish Catholic churches.

The Russians in the West Ukraine are church going people as much as the Ukrainians, if they could do it inconspicuously. This is the case among the people of all the social and professional levels.

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One Easter in Lviv, while leaving the St. George Cathedral, Subject noticed along side a lady, also leaving the church, with a little girl carrying a basket full of Easter Eggs and Easter Cake. There was a man at the distance ~~xx~~ walking up and down the street very nervously, having the collar of his overcoat turned up and carrying a camera. He looked a little suspicious, but it was too far to tell who he was. As they approached the ~~xxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~ man a little closer, the little ~~xxx~~ girl suddenly ran across the street towards that man and shouted to him "daddy, daddy, we have already our Easter Cake blessed". Only then Subject recognized that man -- he was the chief of the Passport Bureau in Lviv(nu), member of the Party, and he was waiting there for his wife and child while they were in the church.

The Russians baptize their children as well as the Ukrainians, and it could be noticed even among the high Party and the KGB officials. They usually choose for such an occasion a festive day in order to distract the ~~att~~ention for having an unusually large number of guests in their house.

One of such events took place on the Day of the Constitution when the chief of the KGB at the main railroad station in Lviv had his child baptized. The baptizing took place at the church of the "Holy Friday" on the Zhovkivska Street, and the godfather of the child was father's deputy in the KGB.

At the Yanivskyy Cemetery in Lviv, where a large number of graves of the Sichovi Strilci (the Ukrainian Sich Rifles) are located, the crosses on all the Sichovi Strilci graves were ~~kn~~ocked down.

In 1959, during the Pentecost, when according to the Ukrainian tradition the people go with the processions to the cemeteries to pray at the graves, somebody has put up a large burial mound of dirt in the corner of the cemetery next to the tree. To the tree was festened a wooden cross encircled by the wreath made out of a barbed wire. On the burial mound were placed a few candles and also one on each of the Sichovi Strilci grave. The candles and office for the dead at the grave of General Tarnavskyy were organized by some old lady. The people were giving her money, whatever they could afford, to cover the expences, but no one made any attempts to find out who she was. All this repeated itself in 1960 and 1961, and probably continued till present.

8. SCHOOLS

To each elementary school in the Ukraine is attached one poet or a writer who ~~is~~ supervises the teaching of the Ukrainian language.

The Russian~~s~~ students refuse to study "banderivskoy yazyk" (the Ukrainian language) even in the schools where it is compulsory. They also are truants during the classes of "fascist" (German) language.

At the University in Lviv, most of the professors are Ukrainians, but there is also a great number of foreign professors (Russian and a few Polish) who do not speak Ukrainian but Russian. The foreign students in Lviv also do not know the Ukrainian language and where they comprise the majority at the university they have ~~a~~ no trouble to outvote the minority of the Ukrainian students as to the choice of Russian language of instruction.

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The bribery is widespread all over the Soviet Union, and the professional schools and the universities are not exceptions. In Lviv, in order to be accepted to the school of medicine or dentistry one has to pay about 20.000 rubles in bribe, to the technical institute about 10.000 rubles, and to the university a little less.

The Ukrainian students of higher educational institutions are very eager to read, esp. those books in the private hands which are "unobtainable" at the present. Once the students lay their hands on these books the owner has very slim chances of getting them back because the books circulate from one student to another and pass through hundreds of hands.

9. PUBLIC OPINIONS

- a. In the opinion of the general public, the UPA (the Ukrainian Underground Army) should have ceased to exist after the fall of Germany because its existence for another 10 yrs or so caused more harm to the people than good.
- b. The people in the Ukraine do not think very ~~high~~ highly about the Ukrainian emigration in the Free World, and are not very happy about their discordance. However, they expect from them some help through their influence on the foreign policy of the countries of their settlement.

The people are laughing at the repatriats from South and North America. They consider them to be awful stupid and ask them "have you brought along a piece of a strong rope".

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- c. The Georgians are one of the worst enemies of the Russians. They hate the Russians very much and they show it whenever and wherever they can. The Georgians are the only nation in the Soviet Union that managed, with the help of Stalin who was Georgian himself, to seize all the administrative positions in their ~~XXXXX~~ Republic -- government, industry, agriculture, etc. Therefore they are financially the reachest of all the nationalities of the Soviet Union. Khrushchev tried to cut their power short but he did not succeed fully.

In the Georgian SSR there are very few Russians because the Georgians did not let them to move there, so there is very little mixture of nationalities. The Georgian people are one of the most nationally conscious peoples in the Soviet Union.

10. MISCELLANEOUS

- a. In 1960, during the time of the shortage of eadible fats, there was going on in the Odessa harbour a preparation of shipment of butter to Cuba. The stewadors instead of loading the butter on the ship threw it overboard into the water. The militia and the soldiers arrived and all the stewadors were arrested and taken somewhere away.
- b. A great commotion was noticed and many different news circled around when the Canadian Premier Diefenbaker unveiled the statue of Taras Shevchenko in Winnipeg, Canada, and later delivered a ^{ee}speech in the United Nations condemning the Soviet Union for their colonialism and for enslaving the Ukrainians and other nations in the USSR.
- c. There is a great amount of cooperation among the Ukrainian people in Lviv, and in the Ukraine in general. They are very understanding and

helpful to each other. Those who hold jobs where there is no opportunity to steal received a helping hand from others. For example, many people in a streetcar or a bus will wink at the conductor while paying her (practically all conductors are females) the fare so she would not give the rider the ticket and keep money for herself. She watches then where the rider sits himself so in the case of control she could give him the ticket in order to avoid troubles for him. In the case she was unable to reach the rider in time to give him the ticket, the rider would rather pay 3 rubles fine than tell the truth.

Ordinary Russians in the West Ukraine trust the Ukrainians more than their own people (Russians). They even force the Ukrainians to accept more responsible positions, on the lower levels of course, because the Ukrainians steal reasonably while the Russians steal everything and beyond means. On the other hand, the Ukrainians do not trust the Russians at all, although the life between them is in general harmonious.

However, as a rule, all better positions in every field in the Ukraine are still not available to the Ukrainians because they are not trusted by the regime, therefore the Russians occupy them themselves.

Thus the Russians do not even trust Stefanyk, the Voyevoda of Lviv, and he is just a toy in their hands whom they keep ~~xx~~ mostly for decoration and to pull wool over the foreign visitors eyes.

At the present, everyone in the Ukraine, even the peasant, is a self-styled politician. In the cities and in the villages as well the people talk openly about the politics, esp. what was broadcasted over the

foreign radio, and the news travels quickly from mouth to mouth.

d. In Lviv, on the Vysokyy Zamok, there is a radio jamming station,
and in the garden of St. George Cathedral there are two TV stations.

e. Out of all the transportational means, the highways are developed
in the largest quantity. They are usually covered with a very cheap
asphalt which does not last very long and therefore the highways
are constantly in a bad shape and need frequent repairs.